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ANGOLA-ZAIRE: Reopening the Benguela Railroad

Zaire is reported to have sent manganese via Angola's Benguela Railroad--the first such shipment since 1975--to the Angolan port city of Lobito. The shipment was made to test the security of the route against attacks in Angola by insurgents of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] only part of the consignment that departed Zaire's Shaba Region on 2 April reached its destination. Some of the railroad cars apparently remain unaccounted for and may have been derailed by UNITA insurgents. The Zairians are nonetheless encouraged and plan to send more trains carrying low-value manganese as soon as possible. High-priced exports such as cobalt or copper will not be risked, however, and Zaire is not now planning to use the route for imports. [REDACTED]

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Because of the increasingly tenuous situation in Rhodesia, restoration of the railroad could assume great importance to Zaire's economically vital Shaba Region, which now depends on the rail route through Rhodesia for imports and exports. [REDACTED]

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Restoration of service will largely depend on international economic assistance. The railroad lacks spare parts, its roadbeds and rolling stock are in poor condition, and there is a shortage of technicians. Prospective donors, such as the EC, will be watching the security situation over the next few months. [REDACTED]

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We still believe that UNITA can damage the railroad almost at will and that the insurgents will not allow normal operations to resume. UNITA realizes its credibility both with Angola and with the international community is largely determined by its continued ability to keep the Benguela from operating effectively. [REDACTED]

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FRANCE-AFRICA: Franco-African Conference

Foreign Ministers from France and several French-speaking African countries meet in Rwanda today to prepare for the summit conference next month of French President Giscard and some 20 African leaders. Although the agenda is not yet established, both sessions are likely to focus on economic and security matters. France, which carefully orchestrates its annual sessions with African rulers, will probably also attract leaders from some countries that were Belgian, Portuguese, or British colonies.

The talks are likely to focus on French aid to African regional organizations and on Giscard's vaguely formulated proposal for closer European-African-Arab co-operation. Conservative West African leaders with close ties to France will probably raise their concern about the Soviet and Cuban role in Africa. Some may also express uneasiness about France's reliability in view of its apparent decision to phase out its military involvement in Chad.

The idea of a "special vocation" for France in Africa is accepted by all French political factions, and French Foreign Minister Francois-Poncet observed with satisfaction recently that domestic critics of some aspects of France's African policy had fallen silent. France views the coming summit as tacit recognition of its leadership on the continent. It is anxious to expand its economic, commercial, and cultural influence beyond the borders of its former colonies into areas once dominated by the Belgians, Portuguese, and British. The French appeal emphasizes cultural affinities, plays down ideology, and tends to cater to local tastes for showy infrastructure. In such a country as Rwanda, therefore, France is able to play a role out of proportion to its material investment.

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TURKEY: Resignations From Ecevit's Party

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The resignations yesterday of three deputies from Prime Minister Ecevit's Republican People's Party further jeopardizes his parliamentary majority. The deputies, from the eastern, largely Kurdish provinces, resigned only days before the parliament is scheduled to vote on an extension--and possible expansion--of martial law.

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The three deputies cited deteriorating public security and lack of economic development in Kurdish areas, but the martial law question probably was uppermost on their minds. Private and public statements by independent ministers last week suggest that Ecevit has agreed to expand martial law in return for their continued support.

Deputies from Kurdish provinces fear that the expansion of martial law to this area will further heighten Turkish-Kurdish tensions. A harsh--and possibly indiscriminate--attempt by the military to root out extremists could lead to increased support among Kurds for Kurdish nationalists or leftist provocateurs.

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Ecevit has been able to offer enough compromises and concessions to keep the deputies in line, but he may now be hard pressed to strike a balance between those who want and those who oppose an expansion of martial law. The vote on martial law will be close, but it probably will squeak through. In any case, it will not be a vote of confidence and the opposition parties, although eager to bring down the government, do not have the votes to do so at present. The resignations could, however, be followed by others as Ecevit attempts to hold together a fractious cabinet and party. Thus, over the longer run, his chances for survival are made even more questionable.

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AFGHANISTAN: Abortive Army Uprising

//A shootout between progovernment and antigovernment troops at a military base near Jalalabad last Friday signals another crack in the military's support for the year-old Marxist regime in Afghanistan. Forces led by rebel officers apparently were strong enough to resist loyal armored units for several hours. They failed to spark a general uprising in the garrison, however, probably in part because of the government's recent purges of the military. [REDACTED] the arrest of officers suspected of disloyalty has seriously disrupted opposition groups in Kabul and broken their ties to similar antiregime military groups elsewhere in the country. If unable to mount a coup, remaining dissident officers may try assassinating party officials and their Soviet advisers.// [REDACTED]

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LEBANON: Attacks on Phalangists

//Tensions have escalated among Christian factions in northern Lebanon following several attacks on Phalangists by militiamen loyal to rival Maronite Christian leader Sulayman Franjiyah on Sunday. The pro-Syrian Franjiyah faction and the Phalange have clashed repeatedly since Phalangist forces assassinated Franjiyah's son last June. 25X1

[REDACTED]

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CHINA: Slow Growth in Industrial Output

China's industrial output for the first quarter of this year was only 5.6 percent higher than during the comparable period last year. The strikingly low first-quarter increase stems in part from a renewed emphasis on quality over quantity. Factories reportedly are no longer allowed to claim as output products that fail to meet quality standards. The country's leaders recently conceded that the economy is out of balance, and they have been pushing wide-ranging reforms in industrial organization and have reordered investment priorities in industry and agriculture. Officials are saying that two to three more years of readjustment may be required for the economy to recover from the decade of political turmoil. [REDACTED]

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FRANCE-POLAND-USSR: Using US Technology

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A French laser sold in 1974 to a Polish research institute run by the military is being used to support Soviet efforts in laser fusion

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is the first indication, however, that the French neodymium-glass laser, which uses US laser glass, is part of the Soviet laser program. The French manufacturer of the laser filed a statement with the US indicating Poland as the end user of the device, so there has apparently been no violation of technology-transfer agreements. Poland also retains control of the laser. This is the only sale of a French laser to Poland of which we are aware.

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SPECIAL ANALYSIS

KAMPUCHEA: Economic Wasteland

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//Kampuchean are facing difficult economic problems no matter who governs them. The puppet government set up by Vietnam and led by Heng Samrin has abolished the harsh labor and population control measures of the former Pol Pot regime but has been unable to revive agriculture, industry, and commerce. In areas remaining under the control of Pol Pot's forces, strict economic regulations, forced population movement, and general deprivation still exist. The Khmer peasant in either case suffers from a lack of physical security, food, shelter, clothing, and health care. The prospect is for continued refugee flows into Thailand and there is a danger of localized famine.//

25X1 [REDACTED]

//The most serious problem facing the Heng Samrin government is providing sufficient food for both civilians and the military. When Vietnam invaded last December, the Kampuchean rice harvest was nearly completed. Output had already been reduced because of serious flooding, previous military action along the Vietnam-Kampuchea border, and the evacuations of major rice growing provinces threatened by the Vietnamese since late 1977. The re-treating Pol Pot forces removed much rice from local civilian storage depots to secure base areas and destroyed what was left.//

25X1 [REDACTED]

The food supply is unlikely to improve until August, when the crop now being planted will be harvested. Many key rice-growing provinces in the east are solidly under Vietnamese control and security is being improved in the rice-rich Battambang area. Nonetheless, the August harvest will be well below adequate subsistence levels because of difficulties in getting planting under way. Seed is in short supply, fertilizer and draft animals are scarce, and many rice fields are vulnerable.

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//Khmer civilians and Vietnamese soldiers go daily into the countryside to forage for abandoned, unharvested

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rice and other foodstuffs. Individualism is the key; no coordinated mechanism for collection, storage, and distribution of food appears to exist. The Vietnamese Army has not completely organized a village committee system, let alone any higher governmental offices that will be necessary for coordinating a national-level effort to eliminate food shortages. Vietnamese soldiers in Kampuchea complain of reduced and inadequate rations and the unpalatability of the thin rice gruel they often must eat.// [REDACTED]

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//Refugees report that in areas controlled by Pol Pot's forces life--and death--go on under the same harsh conditions that existed before the Vietnamese invasion. To prevent people and materials from coming under the control of the Heng Samrin government, the Pol Pot forces continue to evacuate whole communes to remote bases, remove as many supplies as possible, and burn what cannot be carried. The most able peasants, including teenagers, are conscripted into the military; the remainder are forced to cultivate whatever food they can. Food is no doubt given first to military and party members; what is left is distributed communally in tightly rationed amounts.// [REDACTED]

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Material shortages are eroding support for the puppet government. Historic ethnic animosities are strong and the average Khmer has no use for Communism. Khmer, who at first voted with their feet for the security offered by the Vietnamese Army, expected life to be substantially better than under Pol Pot. Shortages of food, clothing, and shelter have persisted, however, and the Khmer distrust Vietnamese intentions and fear a future under Hanoi's domination as much as they fear Pol Pot. Unless the new regime can guarantee security for the peasants and lay the groundwork for an effective system of agricultural production, many Khmer will suffer from malnutrition and disease. [REDACTED]

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Vietnam's own food problems prevent Hanoi from helping to alleviate Kampuchea's shortages. Vietnam's chronic grain deficit of 1.5 to 2 million tons worsened last year in part because of the same flooding that affected Kampuchea. Production is also hampered by the withdrawal of the Vietnamese military from agricultural development

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tasks to fight in Kampucha and along the Vietnam-China border, and the tendency of Vietnamese farmers to produce little beyond family subsistence levels because they have little incentive to do otherwise. Grain imports, largely from the USSR, offset most of Vietnam's rice production shortfall but are insufficient to permit increases in domestic food rations or diversion of rice to Kampuchea.

[REDACTED]

//If serious deprivation persists, some peasants will try to flee to Thailand. Thousands have already crossed into Thailand, although Bangkok has returned many of them to Kampuchea.// [REDACTED]


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